

When the Doors are Open

Berner Air Curtains keep patrons and employees comfortable at popular Michigan Restaurant.

Berner Air Curtain on Restaurant Saves Seating, Energy and Vestibule Construction Costs



Berner Architectural Low Profile 8 Air Curtain Over Double Glass Swing Doors

What initially became a front doorway air curtain solution for patron and employee air comfort, will also result in more than \$500 in annual energy savings and eliminate upwards of \$15,000 in potential vestibule construction costs for the new Fork n' Pint, Lake Orion, Mich.

Co-owner Doug Young thought a complete remodel of an existing restaurant would set the table for optimum American comfort food dining he planned when opening the 4,800-square-foot eatery. However, patrons and employees were frigidly uncomfortable near the interior front entrance when Fork n' Pint opened in early 2018.

After fielding patron wintertime cold complaints, Young eliminated a minimum of three tables and 12 chairs near the drafty entrance. This resulted in lost revenue during full capacity periods, which was frequent since the restaurant was an instant hit with the small bedroom community of 3,000 people outside of Detroit.

Most patrons were cold due to the many front door openings during peak times. "When your host is writing down reservations while wearing a heavy coat and winter gloves, you know there's an air comfort situation," quipped Young, who co-owns the restaurant with brother Burge Young. Young could have added more remodeling expense in the form of an airlock vestibule at an estimated \$15,000. However, vestibules aren't foolproof especially when patrons hold both doors open simultaneously. Furthermore, more space was needed to accommodate a vestibule. **"We didn't have the space to add a vestibule, so the air curtain is now preventing cold air from entering when the door is opened,"** said Young.

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FORK N' PINT RESTAURANT

When the doors are open
Berner Air Curtains:

- Save Energy
- Improve Air Comfort
- Keep Out Insects & Dirt



The IECC Building Code allows AMCA Certified air curtains as an exception to a vestibule.

Berner has both ambient & heated air curtains to meet this code! See Berner.com

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The air curtain solution is a fraction of vestibule costs and many times more effective. Young, who inherited two air curtains when acquiring the first Fork n' Pint four years earlier in nearby Waterford, Mich., previously had positive experiences with the technology. The Waterford location uses them effectively to prevent outdoor air and insect infiltration through two garage door style openings between indoor dining and outdoor patio areas environments.

Manufactured by air curtain producer Berner International, New Castle, Pa., and installed by Triple R Electric, Lake Orion, the 72-inch-long Architectural Low Profile ALC08 air curtain was mounted over the double glass swing doors via steel wall brackets provided by the manufacturer. It activates automatically when the door is opened and an onboard electric heater is programmed with a delay to continually operate as a supplemental heater until the of the air curtain's thermostatic control temperature set point is satisfied. The onboard controller allows Young to adjust the settings, including the motor speeds, as needed.

The air curtain successfully separates outdoor and indoor environments by projecting a steady airstream with optimum velocity, volume and uniformity that meets the floor just outside the doorway's threshold.

While air comfort was Young's motivation, the air curtain will also cut the restaurant's air conditioning and heating energy usage by 139-MMBtu resulting in a \$583 annual savings. The savings is an estimate performed by manufacturer representative, Gold Star Products, Oak Park, Mich., using the free online Berner Energy Savings Calculator and based on a total open door time of 1.5-hours/day, 6-days/week. The air curtain's annual operating costs are under \$10, not counting supplemental electric heat periods.

Young also finds his establishment unintentionally in vogue with current construction trends. **The International Code Council (ICC), Washington D.C., has approved air curtains vestibule substitutes as per the ICC's overlay International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) of 2015.** The IECC creates prescriptive and performance-related provisions that local jurisdictions adopt to establish minimum energy regulations for building systems. Consequently retailers, restaurants and other commercial facilities are taking advantage of the IECC to cut constructions costs. The IECC allows the energy-saving substitution of air curtains to circumvent the high costs associated with vestibule construction, but they must be certified by the Air Movement and Control Association-International, Arlington Heights, Ill., a trade organization for the advancement of the health, growth and integrity of the air movement and control industry's products.

Customers, who were previously cold while sitting near the door, now describe the air comfort as comparable to other parts of the restaurant, according to Young, who now plans to install air curtains over another door.

